

Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL PALERMO PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL TRIESTE
AMCONSUL TURIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, IT

SUBJECT: ITALIAN SQUID FISHING OFF U.S.

REF: PALERMO 40, JANUARY 16, 1978

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED 1. ON JANUARY 17, 1978, THE FIRST
SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS OF THE
EMBASSY OF ITALY, ANTONIO BADINI, REQUESTED A MEETING
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WITH CARMEN BLONDIN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL
FISHERIES OF THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS),
NOAA, COMMERCE TO DISCUSS THE COMPLAINTS MENTIONED IN
REFTEL. HE EXPLAINED THAT AS MANY AS 11 ITALIAN TRAWLERS
ARE NOW ANCHORED IN THE PORT OF NEW YORK BECAUSE OF THEIR
INABILITY TO CATCH SQUID IN THE AREA ("WINDOW 4") WHERE
THIS FISHERY IS CURRENTLY PERMITTED UNDER U.S. FISHERY

REGULATIONS. HE ALSO EXPRESSED THE CONCERN OF THE ITALIAN FISHING INDUSTRY OVER ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS DURING DECEMBER 1977, WHICH PREVENTED THE ITALIAN FLEET FROM CATCHING ITS ENTIRE 1977 SQUID QUOTA. END UNCLASSIFIED

BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE 2. WHAT APPARENTLY PROMPTED THE VISIT WAS STRONG PRESSURE FROM THE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY "TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE PROBLEM" HIGHLIGHTED

BY THE GIORNALE DI SICILIA AND APPARENTLY ALSO PICKED UP BY THE CORRIERE DELLA SERA OF MILAN. BADINI CLAIMED THAT THE CORRIERE ATTACKED THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS "FOR DOING NOTHING". BADINI ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMES FROM LEMARCHE PROVINCE, WHERE MANY OF THE SQUID VESSELS ARE BASED, AND WAS THEREFORE EXPOSED TO CONSIDERABLE LOCAL PRESSURE. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED 3. ACCORDING TO BADINI, THE ITALIAN CATCHES OF SQUID IN "WINDOW 4" ARE SO LOW, DUE TO CURRENT U.S. MESH-SIZE REGULATIONS (60 MM MINIMUM FOR BOTTOM TRAWLING GEAR) AND POOR SQUID CONCENTRATIONS, THAT THE FLEET REPAIRED TO NEW YORK RATHER THAN BRAVE THE WEATHER AND UNPROFITABLE OPERATIONS.

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4. THE ITALIANS WOULD NOW LIKE TO FISH WITH BOTTOM TRAWLS IN "WINDOWS 2 AND 3" WHERE U.S. REGULATIONS PERMIT ONLY PELAGIC GEAR FISHERIES.

5. NMFS STAFF EXPLAINED AT SOME LENGTH THE RAISON D'ETRE OF U.S. REGULATIONS WHICH AIM AT CONSERVING THE FISH SPECIES AND ASSURING U.S. FISHERMEN THE CATCHES AT THEIR CAPACITY, AND DIVIDE THE REMAINING PORTION, OR TALFF, AMONG FOREIGN NATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES CLEARLY ENUNCIATED WHEN THE U.S. 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE LAW WAS PASSED. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THE 60-MILLI-METER MINIMUM MESH SIZE WAS REQUIRED IN THE ATLANTIC SQUID FISHERIES DURING 1977, BUT THAT WAIVERS OF THIS REQUIREMENT WERE GRANTED AT THE REQUEST OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE A TRANSITION PERIOD BETWEEN PREVIOUS FOREIGN PRACTICES IN THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC WITHIN THE U.S. FISHERY CONSERVATION ZONE (FCZ) AND PRACTICES REQUIRED BY THE UNITED STATES FOR EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE FISHERIES. NEVERTHELESS, IT HAS BEEN THE ANNOUNCED INTENTION OF NMFS SINCE EARLY 1977 TO ISSUE NO MORE WAIVERS IN 1978. IT HAS BEEN CLEARLY STATED THAT IN 1978 A MINIMUM MESH

SIZE OF 60-MILLIMETERS WOULD BE IMPOSED ON ALL FOREIGN VESSELS OPERATING BOTTOM GEAR IN U.S. NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES. THE 60-MILLIMETER MESH SIZE REQUIREMENT IS NECESSARY TO ENCOURAGE FOREIGN FISHERMEN TO FISH OFF THE BOTTOM AND THUS PROTECT JUVENILES OF SPECIES IMPORTANT TO U.S. FISHERMEN.

6. NMFS OFFICIALS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE ITALIAN SQUID FISHING SEASON WILL LAST UNTIL MARCH 31, 1978, AND THAT IT MAY BE SOMEWHAT PREMATURE TO JUDGE THE

ENTIRE SEASON'S FISHING SUCCESS BY THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF FISHING IN AN AREA KNOWN FOR ITS FOGS AND UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER. THE POSSIBILITY OF TIME EXTENSION OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ITALIAN SQUID SEASON BEYOND MARCH 31, IN CASE THE ITALIAN FLEET COULD NOT CATCH ITS QUOTA, WAS ALSO DISCUSSED AND BADINI WAS TOLD THAT UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS NMFS WOULD GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO SUCH A REQUEST ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF PRECEDENTS ALREADY MADE.

7. CONCERNING THE ITALIAN REQUEST TO FISH WITH BOTTOM TRAWLS IN "WINDOWS 2 AND 3", BADINI WAS TOLD THAT THE NEW ENGLAND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL IS OPPOSED TO ANY CHANGE IN REGULATIONS, WHICH WOULD ALLOW FOREIGN VESSELS TO BOTTOM TRAWL, OWING TO SERIOUS CONSERVATION IMPACT.

8. CONCERNING THE UNFILLED 1977 CATCH QUOTA, NMFS OFFICIALS ASSURED BADINI THAT, WHEN THE 1978 FOREIGN CATCH ALLOCATIONS WILL BE REAPPORTIONED, THE UNFILLED 1977 SQUID CATCH WILL BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

9. FOR ROME ONLY. IN OUR VIEW BADINI WAS UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE TO OBTAIN "CONCESSION" WITH WHICH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY COULD SOMEHOW APPEASE IANDOLI AND THE TONTINI, AMORUSO AND OTHER FISHING INTERESTS.

10. BADINI READ FROM A LETTER, PRESUMABLY AUTHORED BY FEDERPESCA, DESCRIBING THE ALLEGED U.S. "DISCRIMINATION" AGAINST ITALIA⁴ FISHERMEN, BUT WHEN HE WAS ASKED FOR A COPY HE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO "ASCERTAIN THE FACTS" BEFORE TURNING OVER THE LETTER WHICH WAS SUBMITTED TO THE EMBASSY AS AN URGENT CABLE.

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11. FOR PALERMO ONLY. NMFS WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF THE CONSULATE GENERAL COULD SEND THE ARTICLE MENTIONED IN PARAGRAPH 2 (GIORNALE DI SICILIA, DECEMBER 13, 1977) TO F411, NMFS, NOAA, COMMERCE. A TRANSLATION IS NOT NECESSARY.

12. FOR MILAN ONLY. CONFIRMATION OF THE CORRIERE DELLA SERA ARTICLE OR EDITORIAL (PARAGRAPH 2, DATE UNKNOWN) IS REQUESTED WITH A SHORT SYNOPSIS. PLEASE POUCH THE ENTIRE ARTICLE TO ADDRESS ABOVE. END
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